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CIA/SAVA /WVIND 700919



WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 19 September 1970

NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

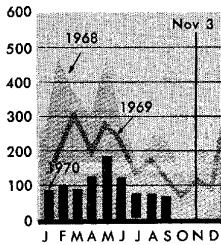
For the President Only

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SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

1968-1970

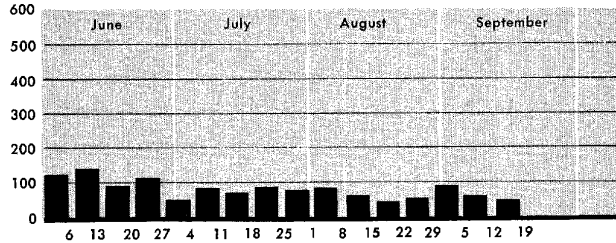
Weekly average for each month



JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1970

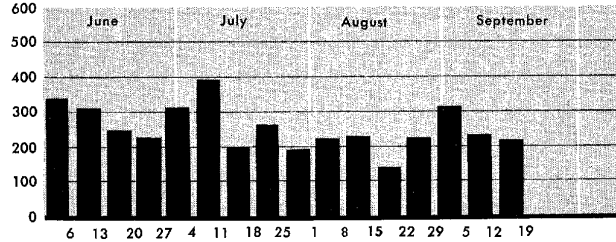
Weekly data as reported

US BATTLE DEATHS



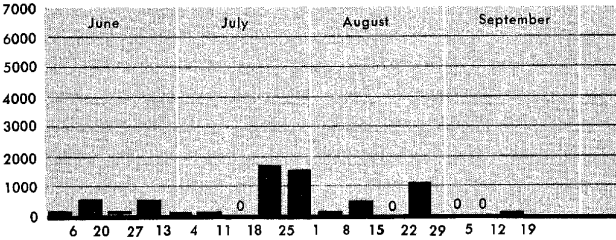
dropped to 49 from last week's 54 as new lows continue to be recorded in this category.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS



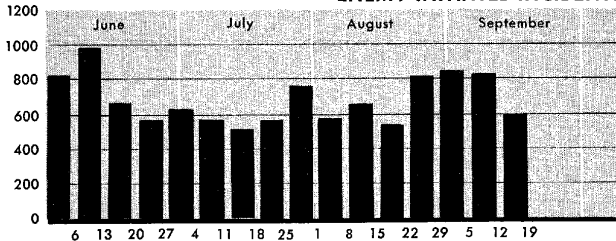
decreased slightly to 207 from last week's 218. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.

INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE



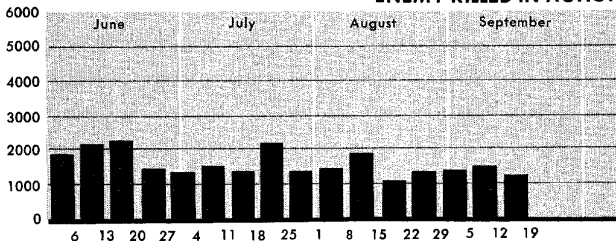
stand at one small specialist group, with a strength of 30. The total number of infiltrators since 23 October 1969 remains at some 65,000-66,500.

ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS



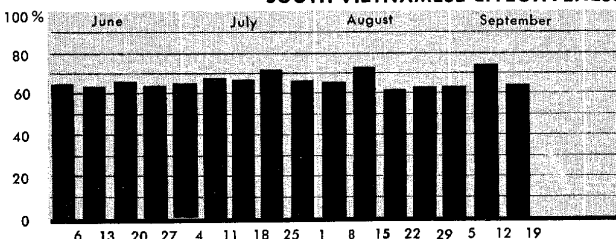
took a sharp drop to 597 from last week's 839.

ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION



fell to 1217 from last week's 1567 reflecting the lessening intensity of ground contacts.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS



as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by GVN forces decreased from last week's 73% to the more normal rate of 64%.

Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

During the week, enemy-initiated activity throughout South Vietnam remained at a low level and consisted largely of scattered attacks by fire and limited ground attacks. Although many Communist units are apparently continuing preparations for heightened combat activity, particularly in the northernmost provinces, there is no evidence at this time that a coordinated country-wide effort is imminent. Current Communist planning seems keyed to having attacks mounted at varying times as dictated by local circumstances even within each military region and some units have begun to report that they will be unable to meet previously set schedules.

In northern Laos, friendly efforts to retake enemy forward positions southwest of the Plain of Jars prior to the end of the rainy season remain stalled. In the south, government forces are maneuvering to retake the last enemy-held base on the edge of the Bolovens Plateau while guerrilla teams placed along enemy supply lines in the eastern Panhandle have successfully mined the route and conducted hit and run attacks on convoys and enemy patrols.

In Cambodia, despite substantial reinforcements, the relief column for Kompong Thom remains stalled and frustrated by enemy harassment and road blocking efforts, but a second government amphibious relief convoy was successful in reaching Kompong Thom with supplies and fresh troops. In the northwest, the Communists maintained their pressure on Siem Reap City and also attacked and occupied two government outposts in Battambang Province in their first such forays there. Elsewhere, the Communists continue to harass government positions in widely scattered locations.

Enemy Infiltration

Personnel infiltration into South Vietnam continues at a reduced level, with only one 30-man special purpose group detected during the past week. The total number of infiltrators since 23 October remains at an estimated 65,000 - 66,500. On the other hand, infiltration into areas other than South Vietnam, principally southern Laos, appears to be running at a higher rate than normal. Two battalion-size groups probably destined for southern Laos were detected during the week, bringing the south Laos total for September to three groups, matching the figure for August. The reason for the increase in these Laos-bound groups is not yet completely clear, but it is probable that they are being dispatched to protect, expand, and facilitate the operation of the Panhandle logistical system.

South Vietnam Developments

The Senate voted 41-1 to pass a bobtailed version of the so-called "program law" intended to allow President Thieu to carry out certain economic reform measures. Most of the bill's original provisions were eliminated by the Senate Finance Committee, but the version the Senate actually passed does establish a "parallel exchange market" which will result in a limited devaluation of the piaster by authorizing a dual exchange rate. Such devaluation is a key element in the government's plan for stemming inflation. The version passed by the Senate gives the GVN considerably less legislative sanction than it originally sought, but if the Lower House expeditiously ratifies the Senate's action, Thieu will probably be in a fairly good position to implement additional necessary measures by decree.

Communist Developments

The new Viet Cong peace proposal tabled in Paris on 17 September by Madame Binh is essentially a dressed up version of the "Ten Points" the Communists announced 16 months ago. The language of the new proposal certainly reflects no softening of the Communist position. Indeed in two key areas the new proposal is tougher, because it is more unambiguously explicit, in demanding that Thieu, Ky, and Khiem must go and insisting that a cease fire must be contingent on the signing of a general political settlement. The new proposal is baited with a vague and designedly ambiguous offer to talk about prisoner releases, a subject Hanoi knows is of great concern to Washington. This bait was sweetened in Soviet "explanations" of this element of the proposal; but these Soviet comments, which almost certainly were carefully orchestrated, go considerably beyond anything the Vietnamese Communists actually said and have no explicit or tacit Vietnamese endorsement.

Madame Binh's proposal is almost certainly targetted at public opinion in the United States and South Vietnam. It appears to be designed to fan peace sentiment in both countries and increase the political pressures on the U.S. and South Vietnamese governments. On the other hand, the fact that Hanoi felt it desirable to make some gesture at this time may be a fact of greater moment than the content of Madame Binh's actual proposal.

We have some evidence indicating that the 17 September Paris proposal is but one element of a broader Hanoi politburo scenario. An intercepted message from a senior Communist command to a district committee in northern South Vietnam and a remarkably congruent document captured near Saigon strongly suggest that all major Communist field commands were alerted prior to Madame Binh's action that a new phase of "diplomatic attacks" were about to be launched in the context of a larger plan. In its alert messages, Hanoi apparently exhorted its forces in South Vietnam to step up their complementary efforts and specifically cautioned against the development of any debilitating "illusions of an early peace." From this evidence, two tentative conclusions can be fairly drawn: There are other shoes Hanoi intends to drop in the near term future and Hanoi is at least somewhat nervous about the morale and discipline of Communist cadre in the south.

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